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Title:

Press releases - Minister for the Environment and Conservation - A National Water Quality Assessment Programme; Concorde to face environmental probe; Air pollution to be monitored; Land use report released; Exports of Kangaroo products

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MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

Press Release

M.C. 84

A NATIONAL WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

The Australian Government is to provide over \$800,000 to the States during 1974-76 for establishment of a network to assess the quality of Australia's water resources.

The Acting Minister for the Environment and Conservation, Dr Doug Everingham, said that the grants were in addition to the \$15.1 million already provided for water resources measurement and assessment during the period 1973-76. Funds are to be provided in the form of non-repayable grants on a dollar for dollar basis based on expenditure on the programme by the States.

Dr Everingham said that the water quality assessment programme had been recommended by the Australian Water Resources Council, and had been based upon submissions prepared by the States. It was also in accordance with the Australian Government's Statement of National Water Policy issued in October 1973. He said that the primary aim of the programme was the assessment of the quality of the water resource rather than the monitoring of pollution, and that it would also provide the basic data necessary for the proper planning and management of the country's water resources.

Dr Everingham also stated that it was envisaged that the programme would continue beyond 1976, and that the programme had been integrated with the existing accelerated programme of water measurement. He said that the addition of quality measurement to the programme would provide a fully comprehensive water resources assessment programme. Details of the proposed water quality data network are available from the Minister's office.

21 January 1975



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

Press Release

M.C. 85

CONCORDE TO FACE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBE

Recent public discussion of proposed Concorde schedules between London and Melbourne is premature.

No decision has yet been made by the Australian Government about whether Concorde will operate in Australia.

Apart from considerations of other factors, the decision will be made only after a full environmental investigation.

Under provisions in the recently enacted Environment Protection Act, an environmental impact statement will be required. The EIS, to be drafted by British Airways in conjunction with the Department of Transport, will be made available for public review.

I expect the EIS to be based on current investigations in the USA on the environmental effects of Concorde. It will also include the results of direct monitoring of a limited number of proving flights of Concorde into Australia.

The public's views on the environmental effects of Concorde will be fully considered before an Australian Government decision is taken.

6 February 1975



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

PRESS RELEASE

13 February, 1975.

M.C. 86

AIR POLLUTION TO BE MONITORED

Australian air pollution control authorities will soon be able to use the most modern and comprehensive mobile air monitoring units yet developed in the world.

The Department of the Environment and Conservation in Canberra has invited tenders through the Department of Manufacturing Industry to purchase three new mobile air monitoring caravans which will be used throughout Australia on an itinerary to be decided by State and Territory clean air authorities.

They will be used for special project monitoring and will provide the first major opportunity to compare results obtained from the wide range of monitors being used in each State. Each van will carry monitors for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, nitric oxide, ozone, non-methane hydrocarbons, sulphur dioxide, dust and visibility.

In addition, a range of meteorological instruments will provide the necessary information on local wind movements to enable authorities to calculate the significance of pollution measurements at any particular site for control purposes.

A data centre for the nation's air pollution measurements is being established in the Department of the Environment and Conservation to accommodate the new information which will be available from expansion of monitoring activities. The information will be used to develop air pollution control strategies on a uniform basis throughout Australia.

There has been an encouraging level of co-operation between State and Australian Government departments during the planning stages for the new mobile monitors.



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

PRESS RELEASE
M.C. 87

19 February 1975

LAND USE REPORT RELEASED

The establishment of an Australian Land Use and Land Resources Council has been recommended to the Australian Government by an advisory committee.

The recommendation is contained in a report by the Australian Advisory Committee on the Environment, entitled Land Use In Australia. The report was prepared in view of the importance of land use in environmental management.

This is the fourth and final report of the three-man committee originally appointed by the McMahon Government in 1972. That committee has since been expanded and renamed.

The committee has recommended the new Federal-State ministerial council to provide for co-operation and co-ordination between governments, and to evolve national policies in land use planning and land resources management.

The Committee has also recommended that the Australian Government provide financial assistance to the States for land evaluation, land use planning and management, and education in land use matters.

Dr Cass tabled the Report in the Australian Parliament today. Later, outside the House, he said:

"This report will be very valuable, as it complements other recent reports produced by the National Estate Committee of Enquiry, the Lake Pedder Committee of Enquiry, and the Commission of Inquiry into Land Tenures.

"The report notes that, traditionally, land has been regarded as a commodity for private exploitation, rather than a national resource of limited extent.

"It points out that the increasingly complex land use conflicts and decisions faced within Australia by Federal, State and Local governments have created a situation whereby land use management decisions of community concern are often made on the basis of expediency, tradition, short term economic considerations and other factors which frequently are unrelated or contradictory to sound land use.

"Clearly, some land use decisions have national as well as State or local significance. And, just as there is a need for land use policies and guidelines at the State level, there is also a need for mutually agreed upon national policies and guidelines.

"However, the constitutional responsibility for land matters within state borders rests with the States, and State governments have most of the experience and expertise in land use. Accordingly, I hope that truly national policies can be evolved in a spirit of co-operation.

"My Department, in conjunction with the Department of Urban and Regional Development, is considering the advisory committee's Report - as well as other related reports - with particular attention to their recommendations concerning a national approach to land use planning and management.

"Both Departments are preparing a paper on this topic. The paper will be discussed, in the first instance, with other Australian Government departments.

"Clearly, an urgent need exists for a co-operative national approach to various aspects of land use planning and management. I hope that early discussions can be held with State Governments, on the recommendation of these reports, with a

view to developing a national program.

"In the meantime, the environmental impact statement and public comment procedures provided for in the Environment Protection Act should help to ensure that wise decisions on land use are made."

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER FOR THE
ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION, DR MOSS CASS,
& THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR
CUSTOMS AND EXCISE, MR KEP ENDERBY

The Australian Government today announced a partial relaxation of the export ban on kangaroo skins and products.

In a joint statement, the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Dr Cass, and the Minister for Customs and Excise and Attorney-General, Mr Enderby, announced that limited exports would be allowed of skins and products taken from States where conservation and management programmes had been implemented. The Ministers said that, so far, two States - New South Wales and South Australia - had implemented programmes which complied fully with the recommendations of the Australian and State Governments' working party on kangaroo conservation.

The programmes incorporate stringent annual quotas for culling of the excess kangaroo population and the adoption of sealed tag systems to prevent the illegal commercial exploitation of the kangaroo species. These measures will ensure the conservation of the three kangaroo species which are commercially hunted.

The Ministers said the export prohibition would remain on the two non-complying States - Queensland and Western Australia - until those States introduced approved conservation programmes. They said the Australian Government was anxious that Queensland and Western Australia should comply.

Dr Cass and Mr Enderby said they were pleased to note that Queensland had decided to introduce a sealed tagging system. They hoped the Queensland system could soon be accepted.

The Ministers said that when the export ban was introduced on April 1, 1973, no conservation programmes existed. Had that situation continued, the kangaroo species could have been in danger. The situation led to a threat by the United States to ban the import of kangaroo skins and products.

At the time the export prohibition was introduced, and several times since, the Australian Government made it clear that exports would be permitted only when the community could be certain it would not be detrimental to the conservation of the species.

The Ministers said kangaroo populations had now reached a stage where they were threatening to compete with grazing stock.

They warned that if any State Government did not adopt an adequate conservation program quickly, graziers would use whatever means they could to reduce kangaroo populations. Such uncontrolled and potentially massive killing would be tragic.

The relaxation of export controls in respect of New South Wales and South Australian skins and products would come in to effect from March 3, 1975. The prohibition would still apply to skins taken in those States before that date.

20 February 1975